

We cannot direct
the wind,
but we can adjust
the sails.

—anonymous



Our Message

...FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The recent incident in Hollywood, in which singer Chris Brown was convicted of assaulting his former girlfriend and fellow entertainer, Rihanna, brought some much-needed publicity to the issue of domestic violence. And while it's always good to shed some light on this once hidden problem, some of the comments the incident evoked were almost as troubling as the event itself.

Our Education Coordinator, who speaks to teens in a number of middle and high schools in our area, heard what many kids across the country were saying: Comments that, as so often happens in cases of interpersonal violence, blamed the victim, rather than holding the perpetrator accountable for his actions. Yes, it's hard to believe someone you once admired, perhaps even idolized, could be capable of such terrible behavior—but to place blame on the person who was bruised and battered just adds insult to injury, literally.

How far we've come, and yet how far we have to go, with the issue of domestic violence. If there is one good thing to come of such a public incident, it's the opportunity to discuss it, openly and honestly, and, we hope, to change some long-standing mis-beliefs about interpersonal violence. It's a battle we fight every day of the year, here at Alternatives for Battered Women—and one we can't win without your support!

Sincerely,



Catherine Mazzotta, LCSW



Cathy Mazzotta

...FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

I think I can speak for most of us when I say, this past year has been like no other in recent memory. The news about our economy seems unrelentingly discouraging—layoffs, foreclosures, unemployment. Like all non-profits, ABW is struggling with the “double whammy” of decreased support at a time when the need for our services is growing even more, due to the very same conditions that are threatening our funding. But we won’t give up—any time our hot line rings at 3 a.m. with a call from someone in fear for her life, or an organization asks us to speak to them about the problem of domestic violence, we’ll be there, regardless of—and in some cases, because of—the tougher times we’re in.

I am basically an optimist, and I truly believe that our best times lie ahead of us, both as a nation, and as an agency. But we can’t do it alone—we need your continued support to make that happen. When we all work together, I am confident that we will make great progress towards our goal: a world where everyone has a home to go to at the end of the day, free from fear and violence. Thanks for helping us make that happen for so many people in our community!

Sincerely,



Teresa Anderson
Board Chair



Teresa Anderson

Our Mission

Alternatives for Battered Women exists to enhance the quality of life and empower individuals affected by, or at risk of, domestic violence. The agency provides a full continuum of services, including crisis counseling, support and prevention/education.

Program Highlights

Residential Services

SHELTER

ABW's shelter continues to run at or near capacity week after week, with an annual occupancy rate of 98%, 2% higher than last year. Whenever someone needs us, we're here to help them, day or night, 365 days a year.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- ➔ We housed 262 women and 235 children, for a total of 497 residents
- ➔ The average length of stay was 15.88 days.
- ➔ As ever, we maintained 100% safety and security for our residents from their batterers.
- ➔ Once again, we served over 64,000 meals and snacks to our residents, while still managing to keep our budget at the incredibly low cost of just over \$1 per meal, despite rising food and other costs

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Oftentimes, the most severely affected victims of domestic violence are the littlest ones—the ones who witness the abuse, or are often victimized themselves. We know that we must intervene as early as possible, before these terrible behaviors become ingrained and repeat themselves in future generations.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- ➔ Total playgroup attendance: 6,928 for children in residence and 233 for children in the community (total: 7,161)
- ➔ Offered 15 playgroups during the week, and four on weekends, for a total of almost 1,000 over the year



Non-Residential Services

Yes, we're known for the sanctuary we provide, and we're proud of the work we do—but there's so much more:

HOTLINE

This is often someone's first interaction with ABW, whether it's a victim who's ready to reach out for help, or a concerned neighbor or friend who wants to help someone they're worried about. Our hotline counselors are trained to give support, referrals, and, most importantly, credence in the stories they hear, often from people who are convinced, "I'm all alone—no one will believe me." We do, and we're here to listen, and help.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Responded to 1,275 new and 2,786 repeat calls, for a total of 4,061 calls
- Provided counseling 2,410 times and information 1,514 times
- Gave crisis counseling 693 times; advocacy 1,748 times; and referrals 3,364 times

TRANSITIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Most folks might not realize it, but we help almost four times as many women and children in our non-residential programs, as we do in our shelter. Some of these clients may have stayed in our residence at one time, but many never have. Either way, we're here whenever they need our help, whether it's with counseling, referrals, or practical assistance with every day skills like how to find a place to stay or to begin a job search.

“Your staff made me feel confident I was doing the right thing...they attended every court appearance with me, explained procedures, even gave me bus passes to help with transportation. But more importantly, they gave me the strength and courage to carry on...I don't think I would have gotten through without the help of ABW!”

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—former client

TRANSITIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES, continued

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- ↳ Delivered individual and closed-group services to 198 victims of domestic violence, seeing them on an average of 5.2 times.
- ↳ 283 non-residential women attended community support groups an average of 4 times.
- ↳ 81 women participated in outreach groups off-site
- ↳ The Safety First program provided consultation regarding domestic violence to Child Protective Service caseworkers on 234 cases. 199 Victims of abuse, who are concurrently being investigated by Child Protective Services, received counseling, safety planning, advocacy and/or other services.
- ↳ Project Keepsafe met with 87 individuals, conducted 71 group sessions (average of 6 clients per group), and presented two 8-hour trainings for collaborative partners.

VOLUNTEER SERVICES

ABW volunteers are always willing to lend a hand—and an ear, and a shoulder to cry on, and a voice to read stories to children. You name it, they do it for us, and with a cheerful, can-do attitude! We are able to do so much more, for so many more people, with their support and help.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ↳ 85 volunteers provided 9,589 hours of service, valued at approximately \$194,177!
- ↳ 61 volunteers are providing ongoing service, and 10 new volunteers were added to the corps of current volunteers
- ↳ Six new members were voted onto our Board of Directors at our annual meeting in November 2008
- ↳ ABW awarded its Fourth Annual Annette Itkin Volunteer of the Year award, to **Corinne Nelson** and **Nancy Rice** (indirect service award) and volunteer and **Mary Ellen Rich** (direct service award). The “Above and Beyond” service award was given to **Kathy Shay**.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY AWARENESS

We're not just about crisis management—we also believe very strongly in preventing violence before it happens. One of the best ways to do this, is to intervene before the cycle repeats itself in subsequent generations.

Research shows, again and again, that children who witness violence often go on either to become victims themselves, or to inflict violence on others. This heartbreaking cycle must stop, and we intend to do everything in our power to ensure that it does.

And, through our **Speaker's Bureau**, we also reach out to community groups—Scout troops, service organizations, community groups, health care and other professionals—to teach them about the issue of domestic violence, and dispel the many myths about this difficult issue.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Our educators gave 553 presentations to 12,284 students from 40 high schools, 12 middle schools, 9 alternative education programs, in a total of 11 different school districts, as well as 15 colleges and adult ed programs, and 27 youth programs
- We also provided 73 presentations to 1,796 adults
- Gave a total of 653 presentations to 14,616 people

COURT ADVOCACY

Housed permanently at the Hall of Justice, our Court Advocates work with ABW clients as they are seeking redress through the courts. Dealing with the legal system can be complex and, for a first-timer, even intimidating. We're here to help make the experience much less daunting, offering support, advice, and a quiet place to rest and relax.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Served 1,532 clients
- Helped secure 447 permanent orders of protection and 2 five-year orders of protection
- Made 867 referrals to the Legal Aid Society
- Helped protect 2,568 children



*Nobody can go back
and start a new
beginning, but anyone
can start today and
make a new ending.*

— Maria Robinson

Award Winners

Every year, ABW is proud to recognize members of our community who speak out against domestic violence, and work toward its eradication. We are thrilled to give the following individuals and groups the thanks they so richly deserve.

RESTORE THE HOPE AWARD

This award is presented to an individual, business or organization in our community for their commitment to restoring hope to victims of domestic violence.

This year, it is our honor to present the Restore the Hope Award to **The Cornell/Weinstein Family Foundation**, which has supported our agency with grants since 1997.

From funding for summer interns, to renovating our waiting room at the Hall of Justice, to helping purchase such useful essentials as baby and car seats, washers and dryers, and air conditioners, they have been true friends to our agency, year in and year out.

And in 2008, they took their generosity to another level, granting us the funds we needed not just to buy an agency van—a dream we'd had so long, we didn't think it would ever come true!—but also additional money for a "maintenance fund" so we can keep the van in good repair.

From transporting clients, to picking up large quantities of food and supplies, to getting staff to out-of-town meetings and training sessions, the van has been an invaluable addition. The Cornell and Weinstein families' vote of confidence in the work we do gives us the energy to keep serving the women and children in our area who need us most, 24 hours a day. We thank them whole-heartedly for their confidence in us, and we hope they are as happy with the return on their investment, as we are to be able to work with them, year after year!

STOP THE HURT AWARD

This award recognizes individuals or organizations that work to educate and make our community aware of the issue of domestic violence.

ABW is pleased to present this year's Stop the Hurt Award to **Twisted Sisters**, a local women's motorcycle club.

They have been good friends to us for many years, naming us as the sole beneficiary of their annual pig roast since 2002. This event has raised thousands of dollars for our agency, as well as increased awareness of the issue of domestic violence among hundreds of club members and guests. They are a prime example of the many community groups whose continued support we are fortunate enough to benefit from, year after year. How lucky we are to have such good friends in our community!

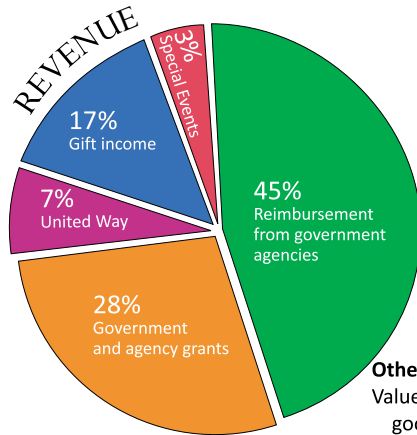
SPECIAL FRIEND AWARD

The Special Friend Award recognizes someone who is there when you need them, gives freely of themselves, and never thinks twice about using their talents to help.

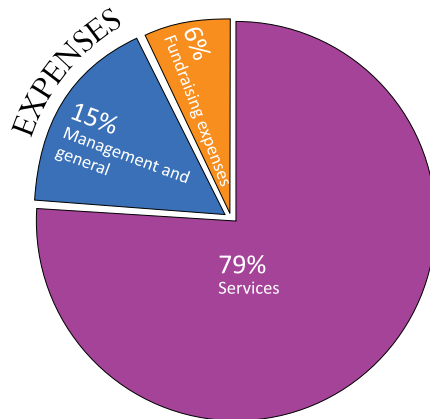
There are publications, and then there are publications. You know the difference—brochures you casually read, or ones your eyes just can't leave. The pieces that RIT Professor **Thérèse Hannigan** designs for ABW are the ones that demand your attention, and keep it.

No matter what we ask Thérèse to help us with, whether it's something as straightforward as an annual appeal mailer, or as something as complex as a case statement, she is willing to donate her time and talent. And she's done it all gratis, which we truly appreciate, especially in this tight economy—every penny we don't have to spend is one we don't have to raise! We are deeply grateful for her energy, enthusiasm, and artistry.

2008/09 Financials



Other Revenue
 Value of donated goods and services, <1%
 Gifts to the Endowment, <1%
 Miscellaneous Income, <1%



OPERATING REVENUE

Reimbursement from government agencies (fee for services)	\$ 1,026,308
Government and agency grants	631,591
United Way funding	160,000
Special events	71,527
Gift income	395,084
Value of donated goods and services	235
Gifts to the Endowment	1,000
Miscellaneous Income	7,826

Total Operating Revenue **\$ 2,293,571**

OPERATING EXPENSES

Services	1,766,864
Management and General	332,511
Fundraising Expenses	134,413

Total Operating Expenses **\$ 2,233,788**

NON-OPERATING REVENUE

Investment income (loss) net	(319,876)
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SUMMARIZED BALANCE SHEET (as of March 31, 2009)

Cash	403,559
Accounts receivable	446,704
Pledges receivable	27,328
Property & Equipment (net)	874,722
Due (to) other funds	(81,424)
Other	24,672

Total Assets **\$ 1,695,561**

Liabilities	415,818
Net assets	1,279,743

Total liabilities and net assets **\$ 1,695,561**

Total agency budget **\$ 2,247,648**

Clouds come floating into my life,
no longer to carry rain or usher storm,
but to add color to my sunset sky.

- Rabindranath Tagore



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P.O. Box 39601
Rochester, New York 14604
Hotline (585) 232-7353
TTY (585) 232-1741
Visit our website at
www.abwrochester.org